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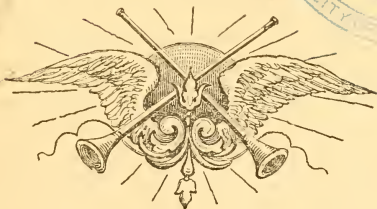
OR,

A SUMMONS TO WORK IN CHRIST'S
ARMY.

BY

A VOLUNTEER NURSE.

Mrs. S. K. Brander



AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.

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DEAR READER, did you ever hear the bugle call in camp? If so, did it not rouse all the martial spirit within you to fall into the ranks, and do your duty? Thus I felt, when I heard it.

And now I write this little volume with the earnest desire and hope, that all who read it may be so stirred by its martial sounds, that they will no longer be able to resist the summons to "fall into the ranks," and do their duty in the Army of the Lord.

"The bugle call, the bugle call,
That sound once more I hear ;
Rouse, brothers, comrades, friends, arouse,
Fall in ! the foe is near."

Dedicated to the memory of one
Whose life was "living for Christ,"
Whose death was "dying in Christ,"
And whose dying injunction was,
"Work for Christ."

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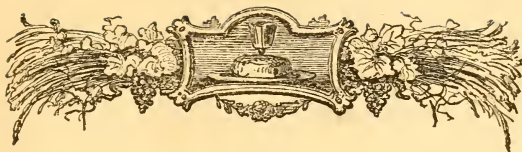
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THE BUGLE CALL.

CHAPTER I.

THE EMBARKATION.

PROBABLY no woman who took any part in our late civil war will ever forget the strong impressions left upon her mind by what she then saw and heard. My own impressions are as vivid as though it were but yesterday that I had passed through those stirring events; and those which I am now attempting to relate will be wholly and entirely true, precisely as I saw and felt

them, save that, after the lapse of more than eight years, I can scarcely do them justice.

My early experiences were somewhat peculiar. I had long desired to go the front as an army nurse, but circumstances beyond my control had prevented. Since our national struggle had commenced, I had been drinking deeply of the cup of sorrow, and now believed that not only would my sorrow be diminished by seeing it in the light of the heavier woes and sorrows of others, but that I might be able to comfort them by "the comfort wherewith I had been comforted of God ;" and I longed so earnestly to preach the gospel of the loving Saviour to those who were engaged in this great struggle, that I could no longer forbear.

God made the way plain for me to go ; and when my application was made to

the examining physician of the United States Sanitary Commission, and the simple questions were put as to my qualifications as a nurse, then did I realize the sacrifices attending the work. And was I quite willing to encounter them? "I am willing to die in the work, if necessary," I replied. Then, "Will you go to-morrow on the clipper ship *St. Mark*?" Accordingly, on the morrow I started. Yet, on looking back now, I can see that at that time I had not a full realization of the work before me; only an intense desire to preach a living, loving Saviour to dying men.

Our vessel lay in New York harbor, near the Battery. Accompanying us was a large Sound steamer, which had been fitted up for hospital purposes by the Sanitary Commission, and was to tow us out. I had been formally installed into office as volunteer nurse on

the St. Mark, and had been properly introduced by the physicians. We were about separating from the steamer, beside which we had hitherto been lying, when suddenly I exclaimed, "Shall we go all the way with the steamer?" "Probably not," was the reply. "She will go at least to Harrison's Landing, while we shall remain at Fortress Monroe." Great disappointment must have been depicted upon my countenance, for one of our kind, gentlemanly officers stepped forward and said, "I think you can still go with the steamer if you will permit us to jump you over the hurricane deck; but we shall have no time for introductions." "Anything, anything," was my hurried response, "so that I can go to the front."

Accordingly the steamer was hailed, and I was lifted over the railing, while the kind officer called out, "Dr. M——, this

is Mrs. B——, a volunteer nurse, who wishes to be transferred to your steamer." Then the vessels parted, and I was left standing entirely alone among strangers. My position was an embarrassing one, yet not long was I permitted to feel its embarrassment. But a moment elapsed before a gentleman stepped forward, inquiring my name, and with the greatest courtesy introduced me to all on board. We were no longer strangers. Our cause, our work was the same. We had a common country, a common Saviour. Our party consisted of four female nurses besides myself—a party of thoroughly earnest-hearted women; one gentleman, of whom no less can be said than of the ladies; twenty-five doctors; and quite a large number of delicate soldiers, who were sent on board of the Sanitary boats for a few trips, that they might recruit in health, and were de-

tailed as nurses. Thus we started from the harbor on a beautiful July morning, in the summer of 1862. Now came the dreaded sea-sickness. Who of my readers has ever attempted to resist that terrible sickness, and with what success? It is something I have no desire to describe. Suffice it to say that, after trying bravely to fight it off, and finding all the remedies we had provided ineffectual, one after another we were obliged to yield, and retire to our state-rooms, there to remain until we became accustomed to the rolling motion of the vessel.

Sunday morning came, a bright Sabbath morning as ever shone, and I determined to rise from my bed and look about to see what work the Master had for me to do. I tried to make my sickness an excuse for not rising, for how I then dreaded to begin the work! I

approached a lad who was playing checkers, thinking I would find it less embarrassing to address a boy than a man, and said, "What, my boy, playing checkers on Sunday?" A sweet, boyish face was upturned to mine. "Why, is it Sunday, ma'am?" "Yes, had you forgotten it?" "I had. The fact is, I have been so long in the army I have lost the run of the Sabbaths." "Were you ever a Sunday-school boy?" The sweet face brightened at this question. "Oh yes, indeed, and loved my Sunday-school, and loved my teacher." "Where?" "In Brooklyn." "To whose Sunday-school class did you belong?" "Why, good, kind Mr. M——, in St. Ann's church." "Ah, I know him," I replied; "but what would he say to see his Sunday-school boy playing checkers on Sunday? And what would good Dr. C—— say?" The bright young face fell

at this question. "Would you like me to go back to Brooklyn and tell Mr. M—— that I saw one of his Sunday-school boys playing checkers on Sunday?" "No, no; oh do not tell him. But what shall I do with myself all day Sunday? The day is so long." "Can you sing?" I said. "Oh yes, ma'am." "Then I will tell you what you can do. If you will shut up your checker-board, and promise me not to open it again on Sunday, I will tell that to Mr. M——, and I will provide you with a Testament and some nice little hymn-books. Call all the boys together you can find; read the Testament aloud; sing all the hymns you know together; then you will soon feel as if Sabbath had come back to you again. After to-day, count all the days, ever remembering that the seventh day is the Lord's."

The checker-board was immediately

closed, the promise given, and from that moment Robbie and I became fast friends.

Then I passed on with a heavy heart to find other work to do ; for I must confess I had a nervous horror of approaching the men with what I supposed they would term religious cant. Still, had I not come for this very purpose ? Should I shrink back now ? Did Jesus shrink from bearing the heavy cross for me ? Should I shrink from bearing this light one for him ? No, I must go forward. Our cook (a detailed soldier, also) was lying sick on one of the cot-beds. I said, " Can I do anything for you ? Are you ill ? " I suppose he saw the look of sympathy in my face, for his heart seemed immediately to open to me ; and we talked long and quietly, I drawing out from him all his sorrows, and in return telling him of the tender, gracious Saviour.

In a day or two he was better ; and

our head lady-nurse came to me and said, "I believe our cook would spend half the day making something to tempt your appetite. What have you done to thus win his regard?" Ah, it was not what I had done, but what the Saviour had done that drew that simple-hearted man to me.

Thus encouraged, I passed on, gaining courage at every step. Dear reader, believe me, few will turn away from any appeal made at the proper time, and in a proper manner, on behalf of the dear, loving Saviour. Few cases there are in which the act is not appreciated, even if the offer is not accepted. Few hearts there are that can quite trample on that unselfish, God-man love. It must appeal to everything that is noble in man's nature. I think in all my experience I have never met with more than two or three rebuffs.

Through the day, occasionally, I heard sweet sounds on the steamer, that made me think of home and Sunday-school ; but being unable to locate them, and absorbed in my work, I did not give them a second thought. Late in the afternoon, when tired, and resting from my labors, gratitude arising to God that he had put it into my heart to do this work, and that he had put it into the hearts of the men to receive me so kindly, I heard a light step behind me, and a quiet voice saying, "Mrs. B——, did you hear us?" "Hear what, Robbie?" I replied, looking up. "Why, hear us singing? We boys all sang and read the Bible together. Did not you hear us? Oh, we have had such a nice day. Will you please, when you go back to Brooklyn, see my Sunday-school teacher and tell him that?" "I will, Robbie, never fear." "And, Mrs. B——, when we reach Fort

Monroe, I expect to see my little brother, who is a drummer-boy. I will bring him on board to see you." "What!" I exclaimed in astonishment, "one younger than you in the service?" "Oh yes, ma'am ; and he wouldn't go home for anything. Do not say anything against it to mother, if you should see her when you go home. We both love the service."

On board of our steamer were several colored people. I hardly knew what had brought them there. While most of the sick people were resting after dinner, I drew them together, and, taking my Bible and hymn-book, held a little religious service. It was touching to see with what childlike simplicity they received it—all fairly drinking it in. I had read of their having such vivid imaginations, but never did I realize it until now. I purposely read to them from Revelation of the new Jeru-

salem. "Ah, dat's it, dat's it," they would exclaim, "de golden streets, de gates of pearl; tinks I sees him now. O Lord, may I enter in!"

Yes, Lord, for such thou hast died, even for these poor, degraded children of thine. Hast thou not said, "Whosoever receiveth not this gospel as a little child, he cannot enter therein"? Yea, Lord, we believe many of this suffering race *shall enter in*, and walk the streets of the new Jerusalem, clad in garments of white, and singing their favorite song of "Glory to the Lamb"—the dear Lamb who died for them. Thank God, we trust their days of degradation and darkness are over.

In the evening, one of our doctors, who had a keen sense of the ludicrous, came for me to go down stairs and hear them sing, or rather chant, in their own peculiar plantation style. It was wild

enough. My own sense of the ludicrous caused me to smile, and yet the scene made me sad. They were chanting, in a low sort of monotone, words like these, as I approached :

“De milk-white horses, and de milk-white horses, and de milk-white horses, come go lang wid me. Good mornin’, John de Baptist, good mornin’, John de Baptist; de church-bells are ringing; come go lang wid me.”

This was accompanied with a low stamping of the feet, and swaying of the body to and fro. Their singing was not without some approach to melody, yet it was inexpressibly sad to see such ignorance ; and I asked myself, “Will not the Saviour accept the feeble attempts of these darkened minds at worship, and sometime lead them into the higher and purer light of his love?” I could not doubt it.

Soon was the Lord to bring to them a freedom from bondage, under which, as a people, they had long lived; and might we not hope that he, too, would bring them out of their deeper moral darkness, and lead them into the full light and freedom of his love—"the liberty wherewith Christ maketh his children free"?





CHAPTER II.

AT FORTRESS MONROE.

THE following morning we reached Fortress Monroe, and as that great fortification loomed up in the distance, we began to realize that we were approaching the seat of war. And now we were told to lie by and await further orders. At the North, we had as yet really seen but little of the war; but few of our sick men had been sent home; and though our hearts were filled with anxiety, the reality had not seemed to come within our very borders, as it had in the homes of our Southern people. But here everything bore the impress of war, bloody,

fearful war: the tremendous fortification; the Rip Raps in the distance; gun-boats lying here and there, ready for any emergency; the sanitary boats coming and going, laden with sick men and hospital stores; officials in military dress bustling about, as though intent upon important business—everything the eye rested upon bore written on it in glowing characters, “war! war!” All, save beautiful nature, which never seemed more beautiful to me than at that sad time.

We visited the fort, studied all its implements of war, and returned to our vessel, praying God that this struggle between brethren might soon come to an end. Little did we then dream of the many dark days in store for our nation, before the conflict would be over, and the sun of peace once more shine upon our bleeding land. Yes, we were yet to

be put in a much hotter furnace; many more bitter struggles were we to go through, many more wives were to be widowed, many more parents made childless, many more homes to be darkened, before we were to come out of the struggle seven times purified. Thank God, we did not know it then, for how could we have borne it? Thank God, it is over now, and I am writing of the past, not the present. God grant that our beloved land may never again know such a fratricidal struggle.

“The toilsome march, and the deadly fight,
The prison’s gloom and its noisome blight,
The dread malaria’s poisonous breath
Filled up the ghastly ranks of death.
Quenched for aye was each life’s sweet light,
Manhood’s high noon, youth’s promise bright;
But the blood that bathed our land anew
Was Heaven’s own purifying dew.”

After a few days we were ordered to go to Harrison’s Landing. This was welcome news to all. We soon steamed

up, and were on our way thither, and glad were our eyes when they rested on the long lines of white tents, looking like a city of cottages in the distance. Romantic enough was the scene to look upon, but sad indeed were the stories that the boys in these tents could have breathed in our ears, stories of sickness, defeats, and discouragements. But let me not forestall my story. To the front indeed we went. Almost all of our party had friends in the service, and some of us very dear friends, who had seen death in nearly every form since they had bidden us farewell in our homes. These officers came with ambulances, and giving us a good military escort, took us to the very outworks, as far as we could go. It was a strange experience this, and in spite of our surroundings, we entered into it with a keen enjoyment. I said to one of the officers, "Why do the

men gaze so earnestly at us? Is there anything peculiar in our appearance?" "Nothing, except that you are ladies; and it is now nearly nine months since the eyes of our boys have been gladdened by the sight of a lady." So we let them gaze as they pleased, and smiled and bowed to all we passed: it was but a poor return to give them a smile, when they were giving their lives.

We passed some pleasant days there, one day dining in the tent of one of our officer friends, and having what they called a splendid dinner. What would they have said if we had given them such a dinner in their own homes, and called it splendid? Notwithstanding, we did eat it with a good relish. Again we went to the camp to take tea with another officer, and waited to see the evening parade, to hear the bugle sound, and to hear that sound echo and reëcho,

and come up from one camp after another, then to see the lights gradually disappear, and return to our steamer home with a new sort of a realization of what camp life meant.

This, however, was the bright side of camp life; those boys in the tents knew there was another and a darker side. Yet the scene was to me singularly fascinating. Night after night I would retire to my state-room as the sun went down, to watch from the window what was going on in the camp: watch them bring the horses down to the river side to be watered; perhaps catch the songs of the men, as they were sitting in their tents; or having some sport together. Then see that which always brought the tears to my eyes—the orderlies bring down the horses of our officer friends, and they mount and ride back to the camp. We did not know at what mo-

ment we might be ordered away ; and when they left us, it was with the consciousness that we might never look upon their faces again in this world ; the next battle might be their last. The morning sun would dispel these sad thoughts, as we would find ourselves lying quietly close to camp.

But the parting day did come. One beautiful Sunday afternoon—never shall I forget it—we received government orders to go up to City Point, and bring home our exchanged prisoners ; and as we were going within the hostile lines, a gunboat would attend us. This looked rather exciting, and I must confess, rather pleasing also ; for though we were going under a flag of truce, we looked for some stray shots through the foliage on the banks of the river. No fears, however, need to have been entertained, for our sail was without an adventure of any

kind ; but as the eye wandered from one side of the river to the other, its banks so rich in their summer foliage, we asked ourselves, “ Why must this, our beautiful country, be thus devastated by war, and brother turn against brother ? ”

. As we neared the Point, what a sight met my eyes ! How can I describe it ? My pen shrinks from recording it. I had seen soldiers many times, bright, well-dressed, healthy-looking soldiers—and did not fear their touch—but who were these, this motley crowd on the wharf, straining their eyes to watch our approach ? Were these, could these be the brave men who had left us only a few months since, full of life and vigor ? These half-clad, wan, neglected-looking creatures, men whose touch one would shrink from anywhere, can these be our husbands, brothers, friends, who so lately left us, in the full glow of health and

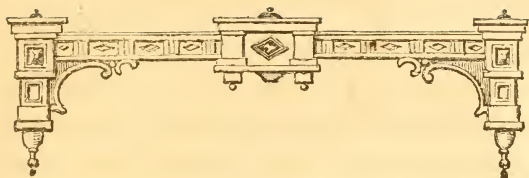
manhood? They are, they are, the very same; and this was the first fruits of war, dreadful war! My heart died within me. I shrank back from all these sickening sights. Now I realized what my work was, and I broke down and cried like a woman, not like an army nurse. "Why did I come," I said, "to take the place of some strong-minded nurse, who could endure that which I am too cowardly to meet?" I fled to my stateroom, and there poured out my soul in prayer to God for grace and strength to do my duty. Then I rose from my knees and hastened down stairs, not giving myself a moment's time to think. I was put in charge of the surgical ward, and told to feed my patients with a very little food at first, as they were so worn by captivity and sickness that the stomach would endure but little. This I did at once: there was no shrinking

now ; all weakness had fled, and I could sit right on the couch of the sufferer, who might be indescribably repulsive, without a thought that it was distasteful to me, only rejoicing that I was permitted to do this for my countrymen and my God. How we worked that Sabbath evening ! for the darkness had settled upon us before our sick were all on board ; and then how we labored to make them comfortable. Some said : “ Do n’t feed me ; I cannot eat with these filthy garments on.” “ You must, for you have not the strength now to have them changed.”

After feeding them as best we could, we withdrew while their tattered garments were replaced by clean clothing. What a change on our return ! The soiled garments were thrown overboard, and our sick men lay cheerfully awaiting another supply of food. We worked

with them until eleven o'clock, when we retired to our state-rooms. I had so entirely forgotten everything else, in my excitement with my patients, that I sat down to do some little sewing necessary for the morrow, quite forgetting, as "Robbie" had, that it was the Sabbath.

The next morning one said to me, "What do you suppose you ladies seemed to us men like, last night?" "I have no idea," was my reply. "Angels," he said; "I could only keep repeating, They must be angels, not women." "No, not angels, my friend; only poor weak women, who are thankful for the privilege of doing something for the brave boys who have done so much for them."



CHAPTER III.

AT CITY POINT.

THE next morning we were informed by our head physician that our boat had passed into government hands, and that we should have the charge of our sick men but a few days, as when we reached Fortress Monroe they were all to be transferred to the St. Mark ; our steamer was to be used for government purposes, and we were to be sent home by land. This was anything but welcome news to us. It is a common saying that we soon learn to love any object for which we make sacrifices, and we found already that our hearts were

beginning to go out to our poor sick boys, as well as theirs to us. The two most repulsive patients in my ward were the two who seemed to need the most of my attention; and it was astonishing how soon everything repulsive was forgotten by me in my great anxiety for their salvation. I knew that they could not survive their wounds, and that I must work faithfully, for the time was short.

I went to the first; he was suffering intensely from a wound in the back, and life in prison had aggravated the case fearfully. Poor fellow! it was sad to hear his moans. I approached him and kindly inquired what I could do. "Nothing, I fear," was the reply, and I soon saw that human aid could indeed avail but little. "Poor boy," I said, "I hope you have learned to look to your Saviour for comfort, for you need his love now

sorely." "No, ma'am, I can't say that I have. I know but little of religion anyway ; I am a Roman Catholic."

"Well," I said, "if you are a Catholic, that need not hinder you from loving the Saviour." "But I hardly know anything about him, ma'am."

"Shall I tell you?" "Oh, yes, do." I opened my Bible and read of the loving Saviour crucified for sinners. Then I read from the fourteenth chapter of John, "In my father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you ;" etc. "Stop," he said ; "what book is that?" "The Bible." "Are you reading that out of the Bible?" "I am." "May I see it with my own eyes?" I handed him the book, laying my finger on the passage. "Read it once more." I complied with his request. "Strange that I should never have seen that before." "There it is," I replied ; "read it again for

yourself." "Will you give me that Testament, and turn down the leaf so that I can find it again for myself?" "I will." Then I told him all—the love, the life, the death, and the resurrection of the dear, human and divine Saviour. How eagerly he drank it all in ; the wan face grew excited, the hollow eyes burned with an intense lustre, and then and there, I believe, he became the Lord's. The tired body and fainting soul rested in that revelation of divine love to sinners. I left him to ponder over what he had heard, and passed on to others who needed my care.

I saw on another cot-bed in the distance a pair of wistful looking eyes following me as I moved about with an expression of longing for rest. I approached, and found the case somewhat similar to the other. Both were sinking slowly from the effects of unhealed

wounds ; the balls could not be removed, the discharge therefore continued, and was carrying away the life with it in both cases.

I had often heard that there were plenty of heathens in our own gospel land, but hitherto I had never seen them. Here was one before me. "I am very sick," he said. "Yes, but I hope you have the comfort of Jesus' love." "Jesus, Jesus, who is he?" Was he lightheaded? What could this mean? "Why, Jesus, the Saviour," I replied ; "do you not know who he was?" "Why, no, I never heard of him before." "Where have you lived?" "In Boston, all my life." "Lived in the very heart of a Christian city like Boston, and have never heard of Jesus?" Was it possible? Could such a thing be? O Christians, why have we been sleeping, how can we sleep, when there is a world of perishing sin-

ners around us? "Have you never been to Sunday-school?" I asked. "No, ma'am ; never have been asked to go to such places." Where should I commence? What should I say? Simply and earnestly again I told of Jesus' love ; and just as simply, just as earnestly, was it received. He loved his mother with an idolizing love ; and from this point I started, telling him of the dearer, tenderer love of Jesus ; and the tender, loving Saviour opened the heart of the poor dying boy to take in these sweet truths clearly and rapidly. I produced my little Testament again and read therefrom, his whole soul absorbed in trying to comprehend the freeness of salvation. Then came the same request : "May I have it for my own?" "You may." "Will you write your name in it, because if I live to get home I shall want to think of you, and to look often

at your name written with your own hand." Poor boy, he would never reach his earthly home, but I trusted he would reach a better and a heavenly country, where he would wait to welcome me when I came.

Others again claimed my attention, but I felt that none needed me as did these two—both singularly ignorant, both seeking Jesus, and both rapidly nearing another world. Others could do without me, but I almost felt as if the salvation of these two souls depended upon my efforts. Often we talked together—often did I offer a quiet prayer, leaning over those bedsides, while doctors and nurses were bustling around me; but naught disturbed them while hearing of Jesus' love. Sometimes their pain would be so great that they would moan aloud; then I would say, "Can you not be brave for Jesus' sake? He

bore far more than this for you." The moans would be hushed, the tears dried, and the poor sufferers would try to bear cheerfully pains that I knew must be almost unendurable.

Soon came the day of parting with our sick boys, and my heart died within me at the thought. We drew up by the side of the *St. Mark*, and they made ready to receive our patients. All the sick from the fever wards were removed first ; our ward was to be the last. How our poor boys dreaded the parting, and how they shrank from the agony of the removal ! They were to be laid on stretchers, carried to the hurricane deck, then placed carefully in hammocks, to be swung over the side of the vessel, and then carried to their beds on the *St. Mark*. It was a trying performance, and one which the wounded sufferers greatly dreaded. " Oh," said the Catho-

lie boy, "I can never endure it; I shall never see mother again." "*He* will help you," I said; "and if you do not see your mother and do not reach your earthly home, are you not going to the heavenly mansions Jesus has prepared for you and me? Pray for strength." "I cannot; I am so frightened." The nurses came for him. He refused to be put on the stretcher. "Wait a few moments," I said; "leave him with me." They brought him some strong milk-punch, of which he drank; then, while they waited, I leaned over him and prayed the dear Lord to give him courage to endure. When I ceased he said, "I will go now, I am stronger. Do not leave me for a single instant; walk by my side, and as soon as I am on board the vessel, come to me again." The promise was readily given; the poor boy was carefully and tenderly carried,

the hammock swung over, and he was laid quietly in his cot on the St. Mark.

As soon as all were removed, we went on board to see our patients and bid them farewell. I dreaded the scene, but did not half realize what an ordeal it would be. It was now growing quite dark, and we could not discern which were our own patients, until we would hear one say, "Mrs. W——, here am I over in this corner." "Mrs. L——, here is your sick boy." "Mrs. B——, don't forget me; Mrs. B——! Mrs. B——!" came over and over again from two voices in one corner. I hastened to the place, and found my two sick boys lying side by side, both clasping tightly the Testaments I had given them, from which they would not be parted for a single instant. "Mrs. B——," they said, "how can we leave you? Wont you ask the doctors to let you go

home in this vessel?" "They cannot," I replied; "their number of nurses is already complete; they can take no more." Then I heard the wish echoed and reëchoed from every side, until my heart sank within me at the thought of leaving them. "I will tell you what I will do, boys," I said; "I shall reach New York first, and when you arrive I will come on board the vessel to see you." This had to satisfy them, but it did not satisfy me, for I feared the vessel would not go to New York, and that this was my final farewell. Then I went on my rounds.

One interesting young soldier, who had been detailed as nurse on the Elm City, had broken down entirely, and was now to be sent home with the rest of the patients. I had often wanted to speak to him in regard to his state of mind, but he seemed so reticent I had not the

courage. I believe I have since learned that those kind words are always well received. He called me to his bedside and said, "I want to say good-by to you. Can't you go with us? I do not want to part with you." "I would gladly go," I replied, "but cannot. Now let me ask you that which I have been trying to find courage to ask you ever since I first came on board the Elm City: Are you a Christian?" "No, ma'am, but I would like to be. I have wondered why you never spoke to me. I have watched you earnestly, and often longed for you to speak, but I have thought deeply. I am from Maine, and I am going home; but I am going home to die. I am in deep consumption." Every word smote me to the heart. Why had I, from foolish fears, neglected thus the work God had given me to do! God helping me I would repair the error now. We talked

long and earnestly ; he was all ready to receive the gospel, just waiting, and I think he accepted Christ then, if he had not already done so. He held my hand in a long farewell clasp, looking at me so earnestly that I felt his words must be true. "Good-by," he said, "good-by. Oh, do not forget to pray for me. We shall never meet in this world again, but God grant that we may in the next." He wrung my hand, and I turned away tears filling my eyes. I think when I reach my last home I shall meet W—— again. Thus I passed from one to another, sorrow filling my heart at every step.

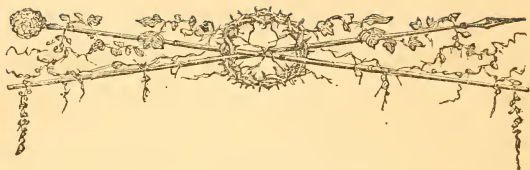
Brave young Lieutenant G—— bade me good-by, with the most earnest longing that I should not leave the vessel. "But," said he, "Mrs. B——, the little testament you gave me I promise to read faithfully. I will try to fight the good

fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life. Some time I hope to get well, and do something to show my gratitude for your kindness to me." "There is but one return you can make, and that is to commence now to fight that good fight of faith ; so that, if you never win another earthly victory, you may win the victory over sin—which will at last open to you the gates of everlasting glory—with the welcome words, ' Well done, good and faithful servant.' " So we parted.

Last of all I came again to my two sick boys, who still carried their Testaments next their hearts. This was a hard farewell, for I knew that there was but little probability of their surviving even to reach New York. "Never, never, never, shall we part with these," they said ; "they are everything to us. We will show them to you as soon as we arrive in New York." We were told

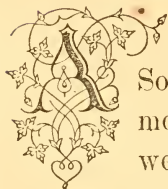
we must leave the vessel at once ; the good-bys were said, the ladies hurried on board the ⁺Elm City, the vessels separated, and we saw each others' faces no more in this world. The St. Mark went to Philadelphia, and whether my two poor boys lived to reach their homes or not I never learned. Probably not one of all those men will ever meet me again in this world. God grant that when we do meet, it may be to bless him for those few days spent on the Elm City. For myself I can say I expect to bless him through all eternity for the work he permitted me there to do.





CHAPTER IV.

ON DAVIDS' ISLAND.



AFTER my return from the South, I still continued to feel more than ever that duty as well as pleasure called me to work for the dying soldiers until the war was over. Our sick men were now being rapidly carried north, and sent to the various hospitals throughout the country. Many were sent to Davids' Island, an island about twenty-five miles from New York, on Long Island Sound; beautifully situated, but hitherto almost useless, as it was nothing but a long, narrow island, composed almost entirely of sand. This the government now decided to use for hospital

purposes, and erected tents for the temporary accommodation of the sick, until hospital buildings could be prepared. Here they were carried by hundreds; but, as yet, the government had not been able to make proper provisions for their comfort. Therefore certain philanthropic individuals established societies for the relief of these men, until such time as the government was ready to supply all their necessities. The government authorities erected for them barrack buildings, which we termed "ladies' kitchens," and in these we kept a store of delicacies for the sick men, which we would prepare and carry out to them under the direction of the physicians.

There were four kitchens, named after the villages whose contributions supported them—the Pelham, the Yonkers, the Glencove, and the New Rochelle. In

each kitchen were three or four ladies, who voluntarily labored there for the sole purpose of ministering to the wants, both temporal and spiritual, of these sick and dying men; and one lady besides, who was put in charge by these societies, and held responsible for the work. I was assigned to the Pelham kitchen; and my colaborers there were a noble band of women, whose friendship I shall cherish as long as life shall last. They were women who forgot everything—their selves, their homes of luxury, their dress, their friends, everything save that men were dying, and souls were perishing; women who shrank from nothing that was womanly, so that the woes of their countrymen might be alleviated. Thank God for such women. The world is better for such as these.

Our work was divided; some remaining within doors, to prepare such things

as were needed for the sick, while others went outside and did what we termed the missionary work, carrying the delicacies thus prepared, and striving to carry with them the gospel of Jesus. Yet the work was one and the same; either would have been incomplete without the other. Those who remained indoors labored with indefatigable energy to provide for us who went out those things without which we could not have gone even to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. We were one in heart, one in mind, and thus we labored together with cheerfulness, prayerfulness, and thanksgiving.

I was assigned to the out-of-door work. How vividly pass before my mind the thrilling experiences of those few months at our island home! But *one* stands out in such bold relief that it seems like a thing burnt into my mem-

ory, which can never be erased therefrom. Let me try to picture it precisely as I saw and felt it:

It was an October afternoon, and I was making my round of visits, striving to leave a little cheer, first in one tent, then in another; a tract here, a Testament there, some little delicacy for a sick man farther on, then a word for Jesus to some weary-hearted one; and thus I passed on my rounds. It was nearly dark when I entered a tent and found in one corner a man apparently dying, with a kind lady-visitor bending over him, endeavoring to minister to his wants. I said to one of his comrades, "I belong to the Pelham kitchen, and if you wish anything for the sick man, send there for it." After a few inquiries I passed on, and in ministering to the wants of others, the dying man quite passed from my mind. About nine

o'clock that evening a summons came to our kitchen for the lady who was in that sick man's tent in the afternoon ; he was dying, and wished to see her. "The chaplain is here," I replied, "he will go." "No, he wishes *you*."

Should I go with these men, entire strangers to me, on a dark night, not having the slightest assurance that their purposes towards me were good ? I hesitated. None knew how to advise me. I went to my little room, and knelt and prayed the dear Lord to keep me from danger ; wrapped my cloak about me, took my Bible in my hand, and went forth without fear. The night was dark and cold, but never were there more courteous attendants than my two plain, unknown soldier guides.

Now let me describe the scene that greeted me on my entrance, though my feeble pen cannot do it justice.

It was a double tent, raised in the centre. In the farther corner lay the dying man, life seeming almost extinct, now and then a gurgling sound rising from his throat, a sort of a death-rattle, as it seemed, which made me fear I had come too late. Around the dying man stood, I should think, twelve or fifteen of his comrades, waiting to see the struggle over. All this was revealed to me by the light of a single candle flickering in a bottle, held in the hands of one of the men. The tent stood near the water's edge. The wind had now increased to a gale, and the waves were lashing the shore with fury. The fly of the tent was loose, and ever and anon it would come with a startling flap against the bed where lay the poor sufferer.

Never shall I forget that scene. I seem to live it over again while I record it. The dying man, the wailing com-

rades, the flickering sickly light of the candle, the sound of the lashing waves, the flapping canvas, the gurgle in the dying man's throat, all combined, rendered it the most impressive scene that I had ever witnessed. My companion went to the bedside and said, "Jenkins, the lady you wanted is here ; can you speak to her?" He motioned to have me come to him, and murmured, "I am very sick, I fear, and I have been so very wild." "*You are* very ill," I replied, "but it is not too late to come to Christ." "But I have been *so* wild, *so* wicked." "Not more wicked than the thief on the cross," I said. Then I read of the dying thief and the forgiving Saviour. "But I knew better ; I had a good father, and I fear it is now too late." "Not too late if you will accept of Christ and his sacrifice, offered on the cross for you."

I then read the 51st and 103d Psalms, the 5th chapter of 2 Corinthians, and other passages, scarcely knowing whether he heard or not. Then I knelt in prayer. Those rough-looking men all stood with heads uncovered, and eyes filled with tears, while I implored the dear Saviour to reveal himself mercifully to this poor dying one, and to his comrades who stood beside him. When I ceased, he said, "Do you think I am so *very ill*?" "I do. I think your end is very near, and you will soon stand in the presence of your Maker. But he is merciful, and if you pray, he will forgive." "Raise me, raise me," he said; and then such a prayer! Oh that I could remember every syllable of it. Thus it commenced: "O God of gods and Lord of lords: Thou, in whose presence I shall shortly stand, help me to realize my sins before thee," etc. He

seemed to see it all, to stand right upon the borders of the other world, looking over, and seeing all that lay beyond ; and the prayer was a cry of agony, sent up to one who must be a God of justice as well as a God of love. After a most humiliating confession of sin, and an appeal to God for mercy, arose a prayer of terrible earnestness for his wicked companions in sin who stood around him. He ceased. I thought the end had come, and I continued the prayer, commending the soul of the dying man to his Redeemer. When I ceased, again he took up the cry, "Lord, have mercy upon me, and upon them," and only finished when so exhausted he could not utter another word. "He is flighty," they said. "He does not know what he is saying." "I do ; I know every word." I could do no more for him then, and left him, saying, "You may send for

me at any hour of the night he wants me."

The next morning early the word came that he still lived. I immediately went to his tent. The storm had now passed away. The elements without were at rest, seemingly almost as though they were in sympathy with the sick man. He lay quietly on his bed, awaiting my coming, and appearing now to have little dread of the approach of the last great enemy. He greeted me with a quiet look of gratitude. "I hope I have found Him. I have prayed all night. I have been a great sinner, but I believe he will forgive my sin." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," I said. "Do you think he will cleanse one who has been so wicked as I have, and who knew the sin of it as I did?" "Yes, if you will accept him." "I hope I have." So we

talked, slowly, and with great difficulty of utterance for him; but I felt that peace was coming, and that the blood of Jesus Christ *had* availed for him. So he lingered for two or three days, each day growing more peaceful, more hopeful. He said, "Write to father, and tell him that I hope I shall meet him and my sisters in heaven. I think I shall." One morning word was brought me that poor Jenkins had passed away during the night, *hoping* to the end.

One morning, about a week later, I was told that a man desired to see the lady who had stood by Jenkins' death-bed. I immediately answered the summons. A plain, quiet man stood before me. "Madam, are you the lady who was with Jenkins when he died?" "I am." "Will you tell me all you can about it?" I gave as full a statement as I could, endeavoring not to omit a

single thing. "Madam, do you think that boy died a Christian?" "I do." "Madam, if that was your boy, then would you think so?" "I would, though I do not generally have much confidence in death-bed conversions. This man's penitence and faith seemed so sincere that I could not doubt it." Then the self-constraint all vanished, and the father broke down before me. "O madam, how I loved that boy! how I prayed for him! But he was so wild; he went so far astray. Yet I never ceased praying for him; and when I heard he was sick on this island, I hurried here, hoping to reach him before he died, that I might hear from his own lips if there was any reason to hope. Now, even his body has gone. I cannot even look upon his dead, cold face. But, madam, if you think he died a Christian, I have nothing more to say, nothing more to

ask for." "I hoped so before : I believe it fully now," was my reply. "I do not believe that God has permitted the prayers of such a father to go unanswered." "God bless you, God bless you," was all he could utter, as he pressed my hand, watering it with tears. "Thank God you were ever sent to Davids Island."

And I did thank God from my inmost heart. This alone would have been sufficient compensation for all I ever did there. But God did not permit the work to end here. He gave us, we hoped, many souls for our hire : but the influence of this man's death reached many more. If time and space allowed, I could tell how one after another of the hardened men who stood around that death-bed were led to the Saviour. One said, "I have seen death, I believe, in almost every form, but never witnessed I a scene that impressed me as did the scene

in that tent that wild October night." The speaker was one of the first fruits. And another, the most wicked man of the whole group, afterwards would knock any man down (I was told) who spoke a word against the religion of the ladies on that island. He, too, I trust, found the Saviour.

And, mothers, I would like to tell you of one more of that same group, who was so wild that they all said, "You cannot reach George; it is not worth while to try." But I found there was one tender spot in that boy's heart. It was the love of his dead mother, who died praying for her wayward son. One day I approached him kindly; and when I saw he was determined to avoid me, I said, "Please give me a few minutes." I drew from him the story of his mother's love, and prayers and death; and then oh how I plead by everything that

was sacred in that mother's love, that he would turn to Christ here and now, abandoning, from this moment, all his evil habits, that he might find her Saviour, and at last meet her in heaven. His lips quivered, he hesitated, broke down, and promised. "But, O Mrs. B——," he said, "why did you speak of mother? I could have stood anything but that." "I knew it, George," I replied; "that is the very reason I plead by her memory."

Christian father, Christian mother, will you not take fresh courage, and dedicate yourselves and your children with a renewed consecration to him, and with a renewed faith in him, as the prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, the covenant-keeping God, whose "mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children."



CHAPTER V.

THE DAILY ROUTINE.

THE facts recorded in the last chapter were among my earliest experiences at Davids' Island. Of course, such thrilling scenes as these were seldom met with in our work, yet scarcely a day passed in which something peculiarly interesting did not arise. The work necessarily was a very absorbing one, and there seemed to be a peculiar intensity of purpose in everything we did. Life seemed as if it were condensed, as though we were crowding more into a week here, than we could do in months of our ordinary lives. The outer world appeared left behind us ;

indeed we almost forgot there was any other world than the little world of Davids' Island, with its two thousand souls.

Let me briefly describe our life. Our building was small, consisting of one large kitchen where we prepared our delicacies for the sick, two storerooms, three small bedrooms for the accommodation of our ladies, and a little dining-room. Our comforts were comparatively few, our duties heavy, our work one of great responsibility, and yet there was a certain indescribable charm about the life we thus led. I cannot tell how it would have appeared to us, if we could have separated from it the crowning joy of the whole, namely, the privilege of working for Christ ; but it always seemed to me that there was a peculiar charm in the very novelty of the life, the emotions produced by it were so entirely different from anything we had ever before

experienced. Perhaps this was in part to be ascribed to the beautiful situation of the island. It was so narrow, that we seemed to be living on the very water's edge ; and there is something in the sound of the never-ceasing, ever-rolling waves, that appeals to the higher part of man's nature. One night, I remember well rising from my bed, and going into our quiet little diningroom, that I might listen to the music of the waves. All was still : it seemed as if the whole island were sleeping ; not a sound was to be heard but the deep undertone of the waters ; it was different from anything I had ever before heard. They hardly seemed to strike the beach at all, but would roll quietly back, with a dull, muffled sort of a sound, like the low rolling of distant thunder. It seemed almost portentous. I think I never heard anything that affected me in precisely the

same manner. I sat long, and listened, wrapt in thought. The overpowering responsibility, the full greatness of our work rose up before me, while I thus sat as it were alone with God. I felt as though God was giving to us, poor feeble women, a work to do, that might well fill an angel's heart and hands. Should we prove faithful to the great trust thus committed to us?

I went back to my bed, to fall into a restless slumber, and after an hour or two had passed I arose, for I could not sleep. What a change! The dull, muffled undertone of the waters had all gone now, and they were dashing angrily upon the beach; higher and higher each moment were they rising, until I almost fancied they were breaking with their white foam underneath the very window where I stood. All around me still lay peacefully wrapt in slumber, and the deep so-

lemnity of the scene spoke to my soul of God as nature had never done before. Nothing can convey my emotions, but those glorious words of the 104th Psalm : “ Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever ! Thou coveredst it with the deep, as with a garment ; the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.”

And then our sunsets—how I drank in the joy they afforded me. I had never seen an Italian sunset, but I could not imagine anything more gorgeous than the sunsets at Davids’ Island. Perhaps the day would be a dark one, heavy clouds scudding across the sky, bringing with them a sad foreboding of the cold wintry days in store for us. Suddenly the sun would break through, the heavy clouds would roll away, and the whole island

be flooded with a golden glory, the waves reflecting back the richer tints of the skies, seeming like the way our Father often comes to his children in their hour of heaviest sorrow, and so floods them with the light of his love, that even their sorrows reflect back the joy of his dear presence.

And then there were the calmer, milder sunsets, when the sun after sinking below the horizon, would seem as it were to come back to a new life, and open the gates of glory for us, that we might see for an instant that which lay beyond. Like some dying child of God, who is quietly passing to the unseen world, and suddenly seems as if for a moment transfigured before us with the glory which is to be revealed; and so vividly does he portray to us that which he is seeing and hearing, that we too feel as if our feet were within the gates of

the golden city. 'Tis but an instant, and he is gone, and we are left alone, with only the remembrance of the glory thus revealed. But like Christian, in *Pilgrim's Progress*, we, too, wish ourselves among them. Sweetly has some author expressed it.

“The city's shining towers we may not see,
With our dim earthly vision ;
For Death, the silent warder, keeps the key,
That opes those gates elysian.

“But sometimes, when adown the western sky
The fiery sunset lingers,
Its golden gates swing inward noiselessly,
Unlocked by unseen fingers.

“And while they stand a moment half ajar,
Gleams from the inner glory
Stream brightly through the azure vault afar,
And half reveal the story.”

I have wandered. I believe I commenced with the purpose of describing our daily life; and the glories which came into that life have carried me away until they have touched the life which is unseen and eternal. But to return to

my story. Each morning would find us busily engaged in our preparations for the day; our home ladies at work in the kitchen, making ready to supply the needs of the sick men, and we filling our baskets with tracts, Testaments, hymn-books, oranges, lemons, flannel shirts, pocket-handkerchiefs, jellies, Harper's Magazine, tales, newspapers, and everything else that we could think would prove acceptable to the men. Then, when all was made ready, the last thing would be to kneel down and ask God to teach us just to which tent to go, just to which man to speak—for how could we choose from among those two thousand souls—and how could we know just the word to speak? After ten o'clock the doctors were through their morning rounds, then we would go forth to our work, in great weakness, fear, and trembling, leaning on an Almighty arm.

Our hospitals were not yet complete, and the men were still lying in tents. The island looked like a city of tents, and though it was regularly laid out in streets, it always appeared to me like a labyrinth, out of which I could never come, without some guiding clew. Then we would go from tent to tent, as God seemed to direct, and talk with one sick man after another of the love of Jesus, until the evening shadows fell, giving ourselves only time for a hurried dinner.

After tea we would perhaps attend an evening prayer meeting, where we would gather in such men as were able to be about; or else perhaps have half a dozen of them in our kitchen, where we would converse with them on religious subjects; or perhaps one of our ladies would play on the melodeon, while we would all join in singing familiar home hymns.

Then, after they had all left us, we would retire to our little dining-room to talk over the events of the day, perhaps for two or three hours; sometimes relating to each other deathbed experiences, or the exercises of anxious souls seeking Christ, or perhaps some incident so amusing that the walls of our little building would reëcho with our laughter. This was our rest, our recreation; and we needed it, for ours was a heavy work, full of anxiety and responsibility. Said a dear ministerial friend, who came down occasionally to help us with our work, "Why, ladies, it would kill me in six weeks to do the work you are doing." So we would have said six months before; and oftentimes now, as we look back to it, we wonder how we had the courage for that which we then went through, and we say we could never do it again. But if God and our country needed us,

we doubt not we would gird on the armor and enter our names on the lists again with fresh courage for the conflict. The work was the Lord's, and he raised up the men and women to do it.





CHAPTER VI.

A NEW RECRUIT.

NOW could we, I asked in the preceding chapter, know just to which tents to go, and just to which men to speak, unless God directed us? And now I ask, amidst the many incidents crowded into those few months of hospital life, how shall I choose those best calculated, not alone to interest the reader, but to help doubting souls to the Saviour, unless he guide me. Incidents might be selected almost at random, for there are many that bring to me precious memories ; but I prefer to speak of the men

whose career I was best able to follow, and who stood up most faithfully for the Saviour, whom they there learned to know and love.

I found myself one pleasant afternoon, just before my day's work was over, standing at the opening of a little tent, in which sat two young men, neither of whom I judged had yet attained the age of manhood. They had a listless, wearied air about them that saddened me at once. The face of the elder was peculiarly sad and thoughtful. "What is the matter, boys?" I inquired as I entered the tent; "why do you look so downcast?" "Oh, we are so tired here," was the reply; "it is so dull, and such hard work to be away from our regiment, lying here in hospital sick." "Ah, there are worse things than that," I said; "but let me sit down and see if I cannot cheer you a little." So I took my seat

beside them, and asked them about their homes and their army life, and told them I would bring them some cheerful reading on the morrow. After talking awhile, until I had gained their confidence, I said, "Are either of you boys Christians?" "No, ma'am," was the ready response, "and we don't think it is worth while to try to be while we are in the army." "Why not?" I said. "Oh, because there are no Christians there; and you could n't be a Christian in the army any way, even if you wanted to be one." "No Christians in the army, and could n't be one if you wanted to either? Wait a moment," I said, "I can prove that you are mistaken. I have a brother who is a Christian officer, and thinks that if a man chooses he can be a Christian there as well as in any other place. Every man's life, you know, must have its temptations." "Oh, yes, but he is

an officer ; that is different. He could not be a Christian if he was a private.” “But he was at first a private, and was a Christian then.” “I do not know how he did it, ma’am. I cannot understand it.” “There is only one way to do it,” I said ; “that is, to look to God every day and every hour for help.” “Well, I do not know that I care much about it any way. I have sometimes thought I would like to be a Christian, but not enough to make any exertion to try to be.” “If I should tell you that on that vacant plot of ground, yonder there was a treasure worth millions, which you could have if you searched until you found it, when would you begin your search ?” “Why, to-morrow, certainly ; to-night, if we could. But, ma’am, there is no such treasure ; you have nothing like that to offer us.” “That is true, I have no such treasure

to offer you ; but I have that to offer which untold millions could not buy. If the wealth of the world was laid at your feet, it would not be anything in comparison to that which I come in God's name to bring to you to-day." They looked up in amazement, and then I told them of the priceless value of the salvation wrought out by the Son of God, and of the freeness and fullness of that salvation—a salvation without money and without price, the only terms of which were to accept and live. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55 : 1. The elder of the two was evidently much impressed. "Why, I would like it," he said, "but it has never come to me in this light before." It was now growing dark, and I bade them

good-night, promising to come again on the morrow.

On the morrow accordingly I went, taking with me some cheerful reading. Again we talked earnestly on the same subject, and I felt that the seed had been planted in at least one heart, and that God would cause it to take root and grow. "I have thought much, ma'am, of that which you told us last night. I could hardly sleep for thinking, and I would like to start on the Christian life; but I fear that I shall not have the courage to hold out."

"Do not trouble yourself about that. Begin the Christian life at once, and God will give you strength to hold out to the end. He will take care of the end if you will only take care of the beginning. Do promise me," I plead. "You will be so happy, and so much better fitted for duty, if you are a Christian soldier,

and so much better fitted to die, if death must come." "I will, ma'am; I will try;" and he did, and from that moment I hope he began his Christian life. Though for many weeks it had but a very feeble existence, God permitted us to watch its growth, until it bloomed into a strong and vigorous life—a life of which all who came into contact with it felt the effects, the reality of which could not be doubted, for it bore daily fruits. His body daily developed into a more vigorous manhood, and it seemed to me as though his religious life kept pace with his bodily growth. I never heard any man say he doubted the religion of F——; it could not be doubted.

In reading over some old army correspondence to-day, I met this passage in one of his letters, written many months after he had left us and returned to the camp: "Never do I forget the

evening you came to me at my tent on Davids' Island, and the impressions on my mind from that time forward. No, Mrs. B——, I do not regret my choice to serve God. I have never at my darkest moments regretted it ; and when I think of what my life and enjoyments used to be, I cannot but rejoice."

But let me give a little history of the progress of this work in his soul. We had evening prayer-meetings, at which the men would rise and ask for the prayers of others. This seemed to be a stand taken, which made them feel that they were pledged to go on ; yet it was often a great effort to take this step. I urged it upon F——. " Oh, I cannot," he said, " I cannot. I am not sure yet that I am even trying." " I am," I replied, " and that step will be a great help." But I could not prevail. One night, much to my surprise and delight,

he rose and in a trembling voice made known his request. I knew that this had cost him a painful effort, and I knew full well that his Christian life would develop rapidly from that hour. My theory was correct, and soon his voice was heard in prayer in our meetings ; and from this time he became one of our strongholds. Whenever a sick man needed more religious care than I could give him, I had only to say, "F——, will you not go to that sick man and try to give him God's word as I gave it to you? It's the only return you can make me." "Indeed, I will ma'am, if you think I am worthy to do the work;" and so, as he improved in health, he continued to work, ever steadfast, ever faithful, a pure, straightforward, honest Christian man. What a comfort he was to us! Afterwards he was sent to Fort Hamilton, where a dear sister was work-

ing for the sick as we were at Davids' Island. From the time he arrived her work became lighter ; he always stood by her ready to help her, and was so consistent in his Christian life that none could now say a soldier could not be a Christian.

But let me quote again from a letter received from him while at Fort Hamilton : " Our prayer-meeting is no longer a dull, dragging meeting of five or six boys, but it is a meeting in which as many as time permits take an active part ; a meeting that I know the smiles of Heaven rest upon, and in which some are seen kneeling down in time of prayer who might have been heard profaning the name of God a short time ago. Miss M—— said once, that if Satan had any ground he called his own, it was here at Fort Hamilton ; but she thought we had a small hold, and she did not want us to give up that little, but make an effort to

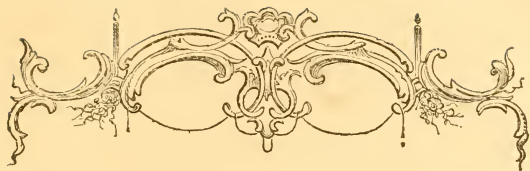
gain ground. And I was thinking yesterday, and writing home about it, how we had gained footing, and how different was our position now from what it was when we first came here. And it is all the result of Miss M——'s visits and efforts, because I should have given up oftentimes, had she not come down and stirred us up. I thought it was of no use, for I felt that no one had any interest but me ; but now there are many to take hold of it." So he continued working until ordered back to his regiment, and then his letters were clear, strong, and faithful, with always the same vein of sadness running through them, for he was naturally inclined to look on the dark side. But every letter expressed the same joy at the choice he had made, the same consecration of purpose, and the same earnest desire to win souls to Christ.

At one time his letters did not come to hand, and I wrote to his sister for information concerning him. This was the reply : “ My brother is still in the army unharmed, or was when we last heard from him, on the 8th of June. They were still lying in front of Petersburg. My brother has been very fortunate so far ; he has survived many friends ; he has participated in many hardships ; he has had many long, wearisome marches ; he has lived a soldier’s life for nearly two years. We hope he may escape one year longer and return home, feeling that he has done his duty. We fear that he will not, that the fatal blow is yet to come ; but we have the consolation that he is prepared to fall, if that should be his fate ; for I believe he is a true Christian, and that he enjoys his religion, for his only desire appears to be to serve his Maker. He has given his life into

the hands of his Saviour, and we are content to trust him in his care.”

June 26th came this letter from him :
“BATTLE LINE, FRONT OF PETERSBURG.
Since I wrote Miss M—— we have not been in any general engagement, but have been shelled once or twice furiously. One charge of scrapnel thrown into our company hit several of our men, but none were killed ; it seemed to me almost a miracle. At any rate I recognize the hand of God in preserving us under such a fire. For my good health, for the preservation of my life, and for all the great blessings I enjoy, I am truly thankful. I am not tired, Mrs. B——, of trying to be a Christian. I find a comfort on the fatiguing march, amidst the bustle of camp, around the rain-drenched bivouac, and at last in the conflict, or while restlessly expecting to move forward to an attack, or to be at-

tacked. Then it is, that I am not sorry that I have taken Christ for my portion. But, Mrs. B——, I am always impressed with a deep sense of my weakness and proneness to stray from God. I am often despondent. Yet I have a hope in Christ, and am looking for a crown of life, knowing that if I faint not I shall receive it. I am glad that people at home are so earnestly praying on our behalf, for I know that the fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. Remember me always at the throne of grace, that I may be submissive to God's will. If it is his will, I want to go home ; if not, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.'" He did live, thank God, to see the war over, and when I last heard from him, he was happily situated in his own home as the Christian head of a household. God grant that he may long be spared to work for Him.



CHAPTER VII.

THE DOUBLE TENT.

SOMETIMES it would take a great deal of courage to enter a tent, when it was full, and the men looked as if our visits were not agreeable ; then there was a great temptation to pass by the spot, saying, “ I do not believe duty calls me there.” One such scene I can recall. As I glanced into a tent, which was a double one, the separating canvas being raised, I saw quite a party of men sitting within, but with no look of welcome visible upon their countenances. “ Good morning,” I said. “ Do you wish any

books?" "No, we do not wish anything." "Well, I will not come in if you do not wish me; but I thought you would like some magazines, or tales." "Oh, we thought you had nothing but Bibles and tracts; walk in, we shall be very glad to get them." So I walked in, and taking my seat among them drew them out as usual to talk of their regiments and their homes.

They soon became interested, and the group around me gradually increased in numbers, and I pondered in my heart how I should introduce the subject of religion here, where I felt it would meet with no response. God gave me words, as he always did. Christ's directions to his disciples seemed as though they might have been written for us: "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that

“speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Matt. 10 : 19, 20.

After asking many questions about their army life, and telling them some of my own experiences in the few days I was at the South, I said to one of the men, “What was the name of the general who commanded your division?” “We were most of us in General C——’s division.” “Ah!” I replied, “then you had a Christian general.” “I don’t know, ma’am, how that was; we men of course knew but little of our generals; but we all respected him much.” “I will tell you a little story about him,” I said, “if you would like to hear it.” Of course permission was granted. “When I was quite a young girl,” I said, “in my father’s church—for he was a minister—there were but few young Christians, almost all old people; and we young people did not care much to go to prayer-

meetings. One summer, there came to our village a young man, with a clear head and winning manners; manners that seemed to betoken a Christian heart. He immediately went into our church prayer-meetings, singing with a sweet voice, and praying with an earnest, Christian heart. The young people were quite surprised, for hitherto they had looked upon prayer-meetings as being better suited to the aged and middle-aged people of the church; and he was so fresh, so young, and so full of vivacity. What could he see in these meetings, that made him love so much to go? We could not tell, but we would go and try them too. And we did go, and some of us soon learned to love them as well as he did, and only wondered we had not loved them before. The grace of God came into our hearts, and the sweet cheerful influence of that young man

helped many of us to Christ. That, my friends, was your general! If ever you see him again, ask him, and he will tell you that every word I say is true. Now if so great a man as your general does not find religion a thing unworthy of his seeking, would it not be worth while for you to try it for yourselves? He would tell you, if you asked him, that there is nothing like the joy God gives his children, when they seek his love." Then, what an earnest appeal I made to them to seek Christ *now*. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

All listened intently. By this time, I should think, there were twenty men standing around me, and I turned from one to another, with those simple words, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." I became very much interested in the con-

versation, and so did they. When I had finished I said, "Now will you accept Bibles, and Testaments?" "Yes, ma'am; oh yes, as many as you can spare." I gave all I had; and one man, who had been the coldest on my entrance, said, "Cannot you bring me a Bible in good print? I will promise to read it." As I bade them good-by, they said, "Come again; oh do come very soon; don't let it be many days before we see you in our tent again." I left the tent, and turned towards home, wondering why I could not *always* trust my Father to speak for me:

"Workman of God, oh lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battle-field
Thou shalt know where to strike."

A few days after, the doctor who had charge of these tents said, "Mrs. B——, do my boys treat you well? because, if

they do not, I will have them punished.” “I would rather you should leave your boys with me,” I said; “but you ask them, for yourself, whether they would like to see that same lady in their tents again.”

Another scene I also recall, of very much the same character. It is in the double tent again, the men scattered listlessly or morosely about. I enter, and sit down by the couch of a sick man. After my usual pleasant inquiries, we fall very soon into religious discussions, and one by one the men draw near and form part of the circle, until I have again a large audience. “O ma’am,” replies the sick man, “I do not believe as you do. I am a Universalist, and so are most of the boys in these two tents.” “Well,” I said, “let us look into the subject.” “There is but little use in that, ma’am,” said the sick man. “I have been brought

up in that belief, and do not think you could change me." "Well," I said, "you have no objection to conversing with me upon the subject." "No, not the least."

I found he was a pretty clear thinker; the rest did not know exactly what they believed. I reasoned with them for a long time, and with much earnestness, of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." When I had finished, they were all seated very quietly, apparently much interested, when I said, "My friends, does your religion make you happy?" "No." "Well, mine does me: it is an unfailing source of happiness. I have gone through much sorrow, but never has that consolation lost its power to cheer and sustain me. Now, if your religion has not made you happy, and mine has made me so, why will you not try my religion? You can have it

for the asking; God's word tells you so. 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' "

To prove to them the sincerity of what I said, I remarked, "I am going home to-morrow to rest for a few days, and when I come back you may be gone. If you should never see me again in this world, but should at any time take up a paper and see my death in it, you need not say, 'I am sorry;' but rather, 'how glad I am; she has gone to be with her Saviour whom she loved;' for I tell you, my friends, I should be glad. Now can you not see that my religion is more than a hope? it is a happy and firm belief." "It must be," was the reply; "but may we not say, we are sorry for ourselves? for we should be very sorry."

I bade them good-by, telling them I should leave on the morrow. The following morning early, a man came to our

“ladies’ kitchen,” saying that the men in tent No. 10 wished to see the lady who called there yesterday. I put on my things, and hurried down to the tent, and found the same party awaiting me. “What did you desire? I have but little time.” “We sent for you, to urge you not to go home to-day.” “I must,” I replied; “they need me at home, and I require rest.” “But we need you too; need you far more than they do at home.” “For what?” I asked. “Oh, to tell us of your religion; of your Saviour, and of his love, and to help us to find him.” “I cannot, I must go; my plans are all made.” “Have you a right to go,” they said, “when we need you so much? We put it to your conscience; if you love the Saviour so well, how can you go until you have helped us to find him?” “You are right,” I replied; “I cannot go. I have no right to go. I will stay.” Then

we reasoned again, just as we did yesterday, only with this difference—that now they were no longer cavilling, but seeking the truth.

So I stayed, and day after day found me in that tent, talking with those men. My invalid friend was evidently shaken in his belief, and trying earnestly to find the right way. I trust he did, for he was sincere ; but after my return from a short visit at home, the tents were gone, the pavilions occupied, and my patients all scattered. This man had been sent to his friends in Rhode Island, and from that time I have never heard of him. Yet there is within me a strong hope that I shall find him again, when I reach my home above, waiting to welcome me to the presence of his Saviour as well as my Saviour.



CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE PAVILIONS.

THE season was now advancing, the tents were very cold, and great haste was being made to get the men into the pavilions before the winter set in.

Let me describe these pavilions, of which there were twenty. They were long, low, one-story barrack buildings, divided into four apartments, each of which held twenty beds; and each room communicated with the other rooms; so that, when you entered the pavilion, you saw a long line of eighty beds, forty on either side. Sometimes we found it.

rather a formidable task to enter these rooms, and face those eighty men. The water was introduced into these buildings, stoves were put up, and there was everything in them that the men needed for their comfort.

Now our work began to be systematized. To each kitchen was assigned the care of five pavilions. Of course we could go into the others when we liked, and we did do so constantly; but for these five we were expected to provide delicacies. The men who had been with me in Jenkins' tent when he died were mostly assigned to one pavilion, and there I was always welcome. Indeed, that event had helped us ladies very much in our work with the men; for they said that a woman who was not afraid to go out at ten o'clock at night with strange men, to see and pray with a dying man, must be a good woman,

and they would at least respect such ladies.

One of the men who came after me on that night, I discovered, had, ever since that event; thought deeply, but could find no light, and was now sad and dejected. I said to him one day, "Why do you hesitate any longer, C——? What is standing in your way? Why do you not accept Christ at once? He is willing." "I cannot; I wish from my heart I could." And so days passed on, and I could get no clew to the real difficulty that lay in his way. But one night the secret was told. I found that after the men had been removed into the pavilions, they had not the courage to kneel in prayer before their comrades, as they would be laughed at, and often have things flung at them while on their knees. In the summer they had been able to go and pray upon the seashore,

or behind the rocks ; but it was a different thing, this kneeling before thirty or forty of their comrades, who were ready to sneer and jeer ; some joining loudly in the sneers to drown the voice of conscience within them, which was whispering, "Go thou and do likewise ;" "Take up thy cross and follow me." Yet, alas, they had not the courage to kneel beside these moral heroes. It *was* a hard thing to do, and did require a great degree of moral courage ; but we found that while they were not brave enough to take this stand, but skulked behind, saying their prayers in bed, trying to ease their consciences in this way, they did not find Christ.

"Mrs. B——," he said, "I cannot do this ; I am not brave enough ; I would rather be drawn up in line of battle, and face the enemy." "You *are* facing an enemy," I replied, "and a more power-

ful enemy than any earthly one. You are facing the powers of darkness, and the struggle is between you and Satan. He will not let you kneel if he can help it, for he does not want you to become a subject of the King of kings."

"Do you not think I can be a Christian without it?" "I fear not. This a sort of providential test; and while you are unwilling to take this step, I do not believe you will find the Saviour. What would you think of a soldier who was not brave enough to own before the enemy that he belonged to the opposing army? Would you not say he was too cowardly to be in the ranks? Now how do you suppose your Saviour feels when he sees you too cowardly to own that you want to fight under his banner?" No answer could be made to this, nor could I prevail.

One morning he came to me and said,

“I have something to tell you.” I saw there was an unusual light on his pleasant countenance. “Well, what is it?” “I have done it, I *have done* it. And now I know that I am the Lord’s. But what a fearful night I have had of it. I hope I may never pass such another. I could not kneel in the pavilion, and I dared not go to bed without kneeling. So I went out and passed almost all night on the shore, amid the rocks. I looked up to the stars, and I seemed alone with God. Then I cried out in an agony of entreaty that God would help me to do my duty. I knelt down behind the rocks, and he seemed to hear me as I told him that if he would help me I would do it. Then I went back and kneeled right down before all the boys who were still awake. But the struggle, the dreadful struggle is over now, and I know I can do it again.”

The result was as I had supposed; now came the peace; and greatly he helped me in my work, having an intense desire to lead others to Christ.

But before I speak of his work for others, I must quote from a letter he received from his mother; and none can wonder that the son of such a mother found Jesus:

“I feel very grateful to the lady you speak of, who is devoting her time and talents to bringing souls to Jesus. She will receive a great reward; if not in this life, in heaven. After I experienced the love of God in my heart, I grew cold, and the neglect of secret prayer was the cause of my coldness. This is the true life of piety. Without it, every grace in the soul must droop and die. Be strict in the duty of prayer; never neglect a known duty; study your Bible, to know what that duty is.

I do hope you will go right forward in the faithful performance of every duty."

Now he worked with all his soul to save those around him. "Mrs. B——," he said, "could you not some time talk with D——? He says you shall not speak to him; for if you do, he believes he must become a Christian. He runs whenever you enter our pavilion." "I will not forget," I replied. One day, entering the pavilion, I was greeted with a loud burst of laughter from all sides. It seemed entirely uncontrollable, yet it embarrassed me very much. As soon as they could compose themselves, C—— stepped forward, saying, "Do not think, Mrs. B——, we are laughing at you; but we all shave each other here, and I was shaving D——. I had only finished half of his face; and when he heard your step, he bounded away as if an enemy was in pursuit of him, and

now he is outside, with his face half-shaved." "He need not have been afraid," I replied; "I had not the slightest intention of speaking to him." "Shall you never speak to him?" was the anxious inquiry. "I will," I replied, "when God makes the way clear, not before."

Day after day passed away, and finally he became so used to my presence that he would not run from me. Still I did not make any effort to speak to him, though speaking to all the rest of the boys in the pavilion. He began to be annoyed at my neglect, it seemed so marked. Still I passed him every day with a pleasant "Good morning." nothing more. He tried to put himself in my way, but I appeared not to notice. Finally, one day, I took my seat beside him, and said: "D——, I shall leave the island to-morrow, for a little rest in

my own home. Probably you will be ordered off before my return, and we shall never meet again ; but I could not leave the island until I told you what it was that brought me here to work for you soldiers." Then I told him of the sorrow God had put upon me, and that after twelve months of weary nursing, until hope had died within me, God took from me one who was dearer than life itself ; and how, when bidding me a last farewell, there was only one wish uttered, one dying message given, " Work for Jesus, darling, work for Jesus." " And that, D——," said I, " is the reason why I am here. Do you wonder at it now?" When I had finished my narrative, the tears were coursing down his cheeks. " No, no. Tell me more ; and tell me all about Jesus' love." I did ; and he listened, his whole soul absorbed in the truths I was uttering. " Will you

not try?" I said. "I will, I will; but I have been so wicked, I doubt whether there is much hope for me."

C—— watched this man's progress with almost a nervous anxiety, bringing me reports from him every day. I do hope he found the Saviour. While he remained with us he maintained a consistent walk, and after he left us I heard nothing but favorable accounts of him until I lost sight of him entirely. He formerly had called the Bible by every profane name he could utter; but he learned that that Bible could give him a rest and joy that none of his infidel books had ever been able to give.

In the same pavilion was another, who said he feared to speak to me lest I should "entice him into being a Christian." "I can stand anything but mother; if she will leave mother alone, I am safe." C—— informed me of this

fact; and when my opportunity to speak came, I did plead by that mother's memory, and told him that mother's love, that mother's prayers, were the golden chain that bound him to heaven. But for those prayers, he would doubtless have been beyond hope long since; and God had sent me here in answer to her fervent supplications. I said, "G——, this is the cord that is indeed binding you to heaven; but it is growing thinner each day. It is now only a single strand. Your wickedness has been so great that your hold on it is almost gone, and now there is but one delicate strand left; are you going to cut that?" He could not; he dared not; he wept at the thought of that dear mother's love, and then said, "I will begin from this hour." "God help you," was all I could say. I understood afterward that the moment I left the building he went to the stove,

pulled out a pack of cards marked ready for gambling, (for he was a gambler,) and threw them in the fire, saying, "C——, I could not have done this if she had not spoken of mother. I could not stand that."

So God led us along day by day, each day guiding us, each day putting words in our mouths, until we literally felt it was not we that were speaking, but our "Father speaking in us."





CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO DAVIDS.

SOMETIMES, after we were all equipped, with our baskets filled, ready to go out, our courage would fail, and we would feel as though we could never enter another pavilion. My dearest friend in the work, who roomed with me, would often say, "I cannot go; oh, I cannot go!" One day I remember well, she came back and said, "I believe I have not the courage to go this morning." "I am glad you feel so," was my reply, "for my heart too seems to die within me at the thought of the work before us." Then we knelt and poured out our souls to-

gether before God, pleading for the power of the Holy Spirit to rest upon us; and rising from our knees, went forth with fresh courage.

We had often some young soldier accompany us, carrying our baskets. I think it was that very morning that a young fellow, named Connor, carried mine. We had prayed God earnestly, that he would show us just the very man to whom we should speak. As we passed on our way, Connor said to a young man whom we met, "Holloa, David, how are you?" "Good morning, David," I said pleasantly. "Are you well?" "No; very sick, ma'am." "What is the matter?" I asked, approaching him. "Oh, I don't know exactly; some disease I believe contracted in the swamps of the Chickahominy. I do not think I am long for this world, ma'am."

It was a bleak morning, and I should

not have permitted him to stand and talk; but the Spirit of God seemed to lead me on. "Well," I said, "David, I hope you are a Christian, and do not fear meeting death." A broken sob almost choked him. "Oh no, ma'am. I was once; but I became very thoughtless, and all my religious impressions left me." "If you were a Christian once, are you not one still? And if you are a wandering sheep that has strayed from the fold, ask the loving Shepherd to guide you back, and he will." "I am afraid I could not find the way back, it is so long since I wandered." "He will help you. You cannot find it alone." So we talked for perhaps half an hour, he weeping bitterly. At length I said, "David, go back to your pavilion. I am now going to the lower part of the island. On my way home I will stop in and see you again. And I will send a friend to read to you."

I then went to the pavilion where F—— was, and said, “F——, you must help me take care of a poor sick fellow; you must read to him, talk with him, and help him to find the way back to the Saviour.” I then went on my rounds, almost forgetting David while laboring with others. On my return about two hours later, as I passed David’s pavilion, I thought I would stop in a moment and see him. As I entered the first ward, I found a man dying, who needed my care. While leaning over him, trying to do what I could for him, F—— approached me. “Mrs. B——, make haste,” he said, “make haste! David is dying!” “David dying! why it is not two hours since I left him!” “Yes, ma’am, I guess he took cold while talking with you, and now he is dying.” Could it be? and was he to die without hope?

I approached his bedside. He appear-

ed to be in great agony, and yet there seemed to be no horror of death before him. "David, I am sorry to see you suffering so." "Yes, ma'am, but it is all right. Jesus is close to me; I have found the way back. I am in the fold. Oh, how thankful I am that you met me this morning. If you had not, I might have died without hope; now all is peace, peace! I have no fears." Surely God had taught me that day just to which man to speak. I lingered by his side a few moments, scarcely understanding the sudden change. In one short hour, the spiritual life quickened and matured into full growth, and the natural life drooping and expiring. Jesus had not left his child long in the darkness. Doubtless he had been His through all these years of wandering. Still I could not but wonder at the perfect rest this tired wanderer had so soon found in Jesus' love. "David,"

I said, "shall I leave you, to go to a dying man in the next ward, who needs me more than you? Shall I go to him?"

"Oh yes, go. Do not wait a single moment. Jesus is with me. Do go, and help the other poor dying man to find him."

So I went and stood over the first deathbed, watching the soul passing to the other world. But little could be done for him, except to commend him into the hands of a merciful God. The end was too near, to seek Christ now, if he had not done so before. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11 : 3. I left him before the struggle was over. Human kindness was of no avail now; he was treading that path which every human soul must tread alone—*alone*, unless accompanied by the presence of the unseen Saviour. Oh, how sad it was, to see one going out

thus alone, as we feared, and stand by perfectly powerless to help. The next day I visited the pavilion again. The bed was empty, waiting for another occupant; the stretcher had been brought, and he who rested there yesterday was now quietly sleeping in the dead-house—a sleep from which no “bugle call” would ever arouse him again to fight the battles of his country—a sleep from which he would only awaken when summoned to answer the roll-call, in the presence of his Maker, at the great day of judgment. I passed on and found David more comfortable, still full of peace, but desiring if possible to reach his friends before he died. He was sent home, and lived to reach them; but I believe, only survived a few days. God grant that he found the everlasting rest.

Another David rises before me now, of quite a different character, and with

a very different history. One day, on entering Dr. D——'s pavilion, (the doctor, who was so anxious lest his boys should not treat me well; ah, he need not have feared, for but a few months had elapsed before the greatest desire of those boys' hearts became to pray him into the kingdom,) I saw a most dejected young man, with only one arm, sitting listlessly by the fire, looking slovenly and neglected. He must have been originally a fine looking man, but the air of languor about him, and the stooping shoulders, took away all appearance of manliness. "What is the matter," I said, "that you look so sad?" "Oh, I am tired, lonely and low-spirited." "I see you have lost an arm; is that your trouble?" "No, ma'am, though I do suffer much with that; but that is the least part of my troubles; I have sorrows that I cannot speak of, and this list-

less life in the hospital I believe is killing me.” “Do not give way so,” I said; “try to look on the bright side. You have lost your arm, to be sure; but I know you would rather go without an arm all your life, than not to have participated in this struggle. Perhaps your private troubles are not so heavy as they seem to you now, while you are rendered morbid by sickness; let me bring you some cheerful reading to divert your mind.” “I cannot read; my eyes are too weak.” Poor fellow, he was indeed to be pitied. What could I do for him. “Have you ever looked to Jesus for comfort?” “No, I am not a Christian, and do not feel even the energy to think about it.” “It is worth thinking about, and will bring you a happiness that you never dreamed of.” “Perhaps so; but I guess I do not care for it.”

Day after day I made little calls upon

him, ever trying to show what a cheerful religion could do. By-and-by, the Spirit of God came into that sad heart, and now he commenced seeking in earnest. All his languor left him ; his whole soul was aroused ; still he did not find Christ. One night he came to our “ ladies’ kitchen ” to see me ; and then came the same confession that poor C—— had made—the same cause was keeping him back—he could not kneel in the pavilion ; he feared not the laughter so much as the appearance of being better than he really was ; for he was indeed a manly fellow. “ R——,” I said, “ this is getting to be a serious matter with you : this is the one thing that is keeping you away from Christ.” “ I cannot kneel ; do not ask me.” “ Are you willing to give up all hope of becoming Christ’s, from this hour ? ” “ By no means ; but I can be a Christian without doing this.” “ I fear

you will not. The struggle is between you and the powers of darkness ; but you will find if you make the attempt, that there is One for you, stronger than all they that be against you.” “ I cannot.” “ Well, R——, it seems to me as if I could this night see the powers of heaven and hell contending for your soul. I believe this is the great crisis of your life, and if you yield to Satan, the hosts of hell will shout with joy, that one more soul is fettered for ever ; and if you are brave and take your stand this very night, the angels will strike their golden harps, and sing loud songs of thanksgiving for another soul redeemed and safe in the kingdom.” He was of a very imaginative and poetic turn of mind, and this conversation seemed to impress him strongly. As he rose to go, I laid my hand upon him, and said, “ O R——, do promise me. I believe this is to be

the turning point in your life." "I cannot ; it will be a fearful struggle."

The next morning I saw him approaching, and my heart sank within me, for I feared he had not knelt, and perhaps never would. There was a subdued look about him that I had never seen before—not joyous, scarcely peaceful, but very solemn. "Mrs. B——, I did it ! Thank God, I had grace to do it ! I hope the angels sang their song of joy last night. But it was a fearful struggle. I feel like a man who has been in conflict all night." "Yes," I said, "and like wrestling Jacob, you have prevailed." "I am stronger now ; but still I walk timidly, fearfully."

I believe the angels did sing songs of joy that night, for this new-born soul was one that was to wield a powerful sword against the enemy. He soon lost all languor and depression, honored his Saviour in everything he did, worked

night and day to win souls to Christ, and was powerful in prayer. After he left our island I followed him for years. It seemed as if the struggle with which he came into the kingdom helped to strengthen and develop all his Christian graces. He wrote me long and very pleasant letters; there was a peculiar sort of a pathos about them, which I judged was caused by his private sorrows, but they revealed the most beautiful Christian faith. I have many letters from him, speaking of his religious life in camp, so many that I hardly know from which to choose; so I select the first.*

After speaking of his longing for a higher Christian life in his soul, and his greater longings for the joys that were to be revealed, he says, "Oh, how glo-

* Let me here state that these letters are given literally word for word. They are not my own composition, but are copied precisely as I received them from the soldiers.

rious it will be, when the spirit, freed from all the clogging and afflicting weight of the flesh, shall wing its way upward into the pure regions of eternal joy and felicity, and never tire of the city of our God ; oh, how cheering the thought ! I would not give up my hope for worlds of wealth, empire, or dominion. This will probably satisfy you, Mrs. B——, that I have peace in believing. If we do not believe, we receive no support or peace from anything. The enemy of souls tried hard to shake my faith in Christianity, but without the shadow of success. My faith is as strong in the power of salvation, and the evidences of my conversion, as it is in the fact of my being alive.”

“It is not hard to be faithful and stand by our profession, if we only use the means which are so plentifully provided for us, and ever held up to our view by our loving Saviour. Oh, how sweet to

lean on his strong arm for support, and to hear him whisper, in tender loving tones, 'Fear not, I am with thee even unto the end.' Then, when trouble comes like a rushing whirlwind, to look up, and see his smile, and rest securely in his bosom, saying, 'Thy will, not mine, be done;' 'Do that which seemeth to thee good.' What a support when our hopes baffled or long deferred, is the love of our dear Saviour. And when the soul which does not know his love, and is well nigh to despair, but turns to him with a full purpose of heart, how tenderly is it received; all its wanderings forgotten, while a Father's blessing is freely bestowed. O Mrs. B——, where should I have been, if he had not had compassion on me?"

June 6, 1864, I received a letter from him, which he had carried, partly written, in his pocket, through a leaden

shower. “For my own part, I have never felt less depressed in spirits; but enjoy a sweet peace of mind, which is more to me than anything earth can give. Oh, to lean on the arm of Jesus, during the storm of shell and shot through which we have passed, is happiness indeed. What a Saviour is ours! how tenderly he watches over his children, leading them in safe paths, and supporting them in every hour of need and trial. It is very seldom now that I pray for temporal benefits, although I trust I am thankful for them; but I seem to be altogether employed in thinking of my soul’s eternal welfare. My constant prayer is, ‘Keep thou, O God, my soul from death, and let not sin have dominion over me.’ ‘Keep thou thy servant in the narrow way.’ I have not felt concerned about my life—my only concern is for the immortal part. If I never

should write again," he says, in closing, "you will know I am prevented by something beyond my control; and if death should call me to another world, rest assured of my trust in my Saviour, who said, 'I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.' This is enough for me. You will know where to look for me."

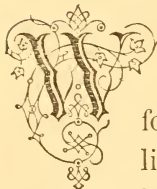
Was not such a soul worth laboring many months to save? After a while his letters miscarried, and I lost all sight of him; but if he still lives, I doubt not he is fighting bravely, under the banner of the great Captain of his salvation.





CHAPTER X.

THE YOUNG PHYSICIAN.

HEN the government appropriated Davids' Island for hospital purposes, I believe there was but a single building upon it, and that a sort of a hotel or house of refreshment, used by picnic parties in summer, the only use, I imagine, to which the island had been put. This was the very building, I think, which we afterwards converted into a chapel for such of our men as wished to attend religious service, and by this time the number had become quite large. There were, as I have before stated, but few trees on the island, and

these few were near the spot where the chapel was located. Its situation was beautiful. It stood on rising ground at the lower extremity of the island. The little grove of trees in front of the building gave it a picturesque appearance, while the background was nothing but a continuous line of heavy rocks, gradually sloping to the water's edge. Many an afternoon have I wandered off to these rocks, there to sit and enjoy the beautiful scenery, or to ponder over the work God had given us to do. From the chapel windows the view was so charming that I often during the service would find my eyes unconsciously wandering to gaze on the beauties of nature as revealed from these windows. No sound was to be heard on that part of the island after the chapel bell ceased ringing, and naught seemed to disturb the quiet of nature, excepting now and then some

little vessel lazily floating up the sound, or spreading her canvas to catch the breeze. There never was a place that made one look more from nature up to nature's God. I think I never enjoyed religious services more than in that little chapel, and I certainly never enjoyed any singing as I did when we all joined in some soul-inspiring hymn, led by the sweet voice of one of our ladies, who also presided at the melodeon. I think God drew very near to us there.

Our doctors, I am sorry to say, with some few exceptions, did not very often encourage us with their presence at our services. We ladies saw but little of them while on the island—never entering the wards until after they had left; and as a rule, we did not care to know them, for we had too much work to do for our sick boys to care to entertain gentlemen. Yet now my mind reverts

pleasantly to more than one kind friend we made among those doctors, all of whom I believe learned to respect us and our work. One case only would I refer to among them. He was a bright young physician from B——, and belonged to one of the oldest families of that city. One day, meeting me on our steamer, he said, “Mrs. B——, I feel very hard towards you ladies for the way you treat us doctors.” “What have we done?” I replied. “Done! Why you take no notice of us at all. We too have left our homes, and are as lonely as the men. We have nothing to entertain us on this dull island, and you will not ask us to your kitchens.” “Well,” I said pleasantly, “we do not mean to ask you either, and we do not wish you; we have too much to do for our sick men to care to entertain gentlemen, and we did not come to Davids’

Island for that. Do you know what we came for, Dr. P——?" "I think there is no mistaking what you and Miss L—— [my co-worker] came for. I believe you came for nothing but your missionary work; but I do not think it is right or kind." "Well," I said, "we have no means of entertaining gentlemen; but if it will give you any pleasure, come, and we will do our best to make your visit agreeable." From that time he and I became fast friends.

I had prayed God earnestly that I might do some good by my conversations while on the steamer going to and from New York. One day, not long after this, Dr. P—— took a seat by me on the deck of the steamer while I was enjoying the scenery. I do not know how it came about, except that God ordered it, but our conversation turned upon the subject of religion, and I dis-

covered that he was a Unitarian. I could not help expressing my regret that he had left the dear Saviour out of his religion, and thus lost the most of its joy. Our conversation was an earnest one, and he opened his heart freely to me, and I found Unitarianism had not fully satisfied him. I prayed God to help me, and tried to make him realize how different a thing religion was with or without the sustaining presence of the divine Saviour. When we reached the island he thanked me warmly for the conversation; and afterwards, in speaking to one of our ladies, he said, "I do not know how I happened to open my heart so freely to her." Doubtless the Saviour intended taking possession of that warm, manly young heart, and he led the way.

Soon after this he entered the navy, and we heard no more from him, until, much to my surprise, I learned that he

was very ill, probably in hasty consumption, and would be taken to his own home in B——. This was sad news indeed, and I immediately resolved to write him. I was told by one of our doctors that his family did not wish him to know his true condition, and that I must be very careful how I worded my letter. So I wrote of nothing but the love of the dear Saviour, and how he came to his children in their hour of need, as I had seen him come in cases of sickness and death in my own home. It was full of Jesus—"Jesus only." I enclosed it in a letter to his mother, leaving it at her own discretion whether he should hear it read or not. Soon I received a reply from her, thanking me for my letters and my interest in her son. She said, "When your letter came I did not think best to let H—— hear it; but he saw me reading it, and said,

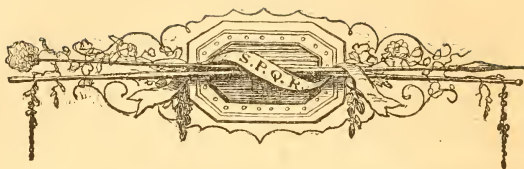
‘Mother, whom is that letter from?’
‘Mrs. B——,’ was the reply, ‘to me.’
‘Strange, mother, she should not have written to me.’ ‘She did, H——, but I cannot give it to you. I do not wish you to be agitated by reading.’ ‘I must have it, mother; it is my own, give it to me.’ He read and reread,” she said, “ever seeming to find great comfort in it.” No further word came, until this from his afflicted mother: “Our dear one is with the angels. On Friday afternoon he left us for his heavenly home. His sufferings have been great from the first; but he was so patient, not a murmur escaped his lips.” She gives a full account of his last moments, and makes mention of his sister’s saying to him: “H——, you are not afraid, for you love Jesus, and are going to him.” “Yes, oh yes,” was the reply. It was all he could say, for speech failed him.

Some months after, this sister called upon me in my own home, saying she should never cease to thank God for sending her brother to Davids' Island, and for giving me the desire to speak to him. "How you helped him," she said. "I was the only Trinitarian in the whole family, and my great anxiety was for my loved brother. I believe it was your influence that led him to accept the Saviour, for he did accept him entirely, and just before he passed away he said, 'I want you all to understand I am not dying a Unitarian, but a Trinitarian.'"

During the past summer I visited his home, and wept with those who wept for their beautiful young brother cut down in his youth; wept as they pointed out to me the garden in which he had wandered, and the chamber from which he had gone home to heaven; and I shed tears of joy too, that God had not only

permitted me to work with the soldiers, but had led me that winter's morning on the steamer to speak to this lovely young man those words which, perhaps, had opened to him the gates of everlasting life. Thank God in every way for our Davids' Island work!





CHAPTER XI.

FAREWELL TO THE ISLAND.

I WOULD not convey to my reader the impression that such incidents as have been related in this little narrative were peculiar to my work, or came only under my own observation. Our whole band of workers were very faithful; and if I were permitted to relate the experiences of my fellow-workers, they would doubtless be quite equal in interest to anything that I met.

But now my work at Davids' Island was drawing to a close. For various

reasons I concluded it was best that I should return to my home. Most of our soldiers were now being sent either to their homes or back to their regiments, and our hospital was being filled with our "prisoners of war." Shortly before my departure, one of our ladies came to me, saying, "Such a man, in such a pavilion, wishes to see you. He says you have been the means of his conversion." "It is a mistake," I replied. "I do not know him, and have never conversed with any such person." "Well, perhaps not; but he says it was you." That morning, while on my usual round of visits, I entered the pavilion where he was lying. "Good morning, my friend," I said; "I am very glad to come in and see you, but I am not the lady you referred to." "Oh yes you are." "You are mistaken, my friend; I never saw you before." "You did, and your one

conversation with me has been the means of my conversion." I did not like to contradict him, yet I was so assured of his mistake that I felt it was not honorable to take the credit of having helped him, when doubtless it would bring joy to the heart of some other lady to see the results of her work. "I would be most happy, my friend, to have been the means of leading you to a better life; but I am so sure of never having met you before, that I should really like to know to which of the ladies you have reference." "Yourself, and only yourself. What can I do to convince you? If I should show you a Testament with my name and your name written by your own hand, and a text of Scripture marked, which text has been the means of my conversion, would you then be satisfied?" The Testament was produced. The handwriting was my

own, it could not be questioned. I could doubt no longer. "You once addressed me, on passing through our pavilion, gave me this Testament, and never spoke to me after that. I often wondered why you did not do so, but I had not the courage to address you." "Ah, my friend, you have made a great mistake," I replied. "I would have been only too happy to have spoken again. My memory is good for faces; but is it strange that, among two thousand men, I cannot always remember which are my own patients?" How the little leaven had worked, and what cause of gratitude had I! Only one brief conversation, and that to have been the means of the man's conversion! "I am going home," he said, "to a Christian wife, and how happy this good news will make her!"

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how." Mark 4:26, 27. It was the work of the Holy Spirit, and that was all we could say.

In this place let me state that such conversions as these that took place in our army were not models of conversion for all times and places. God was fitting men for a peculiar work. Many of them felt that death was very near, that time was short, and what they had to do for their soul's salvation they must do at once and surely. Many of them were men of great decision of character, accustomed to decide quickly, and act at once on their decisions; and their interest once awakened, they brought the same promptitude into the matter of religion. And, on the other hand, I have never supposed that all those men who were thus emotionally excited to begin

a new life, held out faithfully to the end. Doubtless some seed only fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up ; some on stony ground, which had not much depth, and when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away ; and some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit ; but, thank God, some fell on good ground, and did yield fruit ; that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred fold. Mark 4 : 4. And, doubtless, at the last great day, while we shall find some missing whom we expected and hoped to see, we shall also find some like this poor man, in whom the seed has taken root and sprung up so noiselessly that we did not even recognize its existence. May we, then, have the consciousness that “we

did what we could " to help on this glorious work.

About this time I left the island, and returned to my own home, occasionally, however, going back to spend a few days in cheering my old patients who were still left.

Sometimes when I would enter a pavilion where I was pretty well known, it was refreshing to see the look of joy that welcomed me, and how quickly all dejection would pass from the countenances of those tried men. My old friend C——, one of the first fruits of my work on the island, was still there, retained as wardmaster in one of the pavilions in which were our "prisoners of war." "Mrs. B——," he said to me one day, "wont you come in and see some of my sick boys?" "I cannot," I replied; "my work here, you know, has been to nurse our own soldiers, not the Southerners.

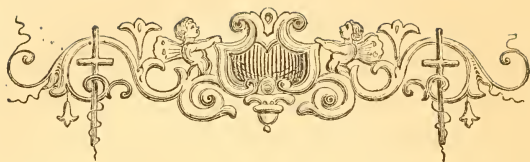
Do not ask it of me." "I know you well enough to be certain that if I could get you in my pavilion once, you would not go out until you had learned not only to pity, but to love, some of those poor boys. Do come in." How could I refuse? He did know me well enough, and I knew myself so well that I did not want to go in, fully realizing that my sympathies would all be roused at the sight of suffering.

Two there were in whom he took an especial interest, and with those he desired me to converse. Both were very young, and both suffering much. One had been obliged to have his leg amputated. Poor lads, they grieved as much as we did that this dreadful struggle was so separating our people, and longed as we did to see it soon come to an end. They seemed much interested in the simple story of Christ's love, as

I always told it, and promised to try and lead a Christian life, C—— promising to help them. He was right; for when I left them, my heart had warmed to them, and I forgot they were southern soldiers, only remembering that they were suffering men, and needing a Saviour. Oh, how quickly does the love of the dear Saviour in the heart break down all the barriers which keep men apart! I would like to quote a few lines from a letter received some time afterwards from my friend C——, the ward-master: "The young men you were talking with when here last have left. They wished to be remembered to you. McG—— was very sick after you were here. His leg had to be amputated again. I was so sorry for him. Almost every day he would inquire of me when 'that lady' was coming again. He was almost well when he left. W. W——

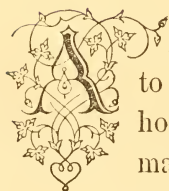
improved so much that he could walk all around the island. His father came to see him, and he is soon to go home. Mrs. B——, I could not help loving the boys if they were ‘seecesh,’ and I know they both loved me, for they cried like children when they bade me good-by.” So it was. The peace of God in these hearts had broken down all distinction between North and South. May this sweet spirit of peace continue to be poured out until all bitterness shall have passed away for ever, and our whole nation shall be one in Christ Jesus.





CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.



AND now I must bid farewell to my patient reader, only hoping that this little book may give him half the pleasure in reading that it has the writer in preparing it. I have made no apology in bringing it before the public, and intend making none. It is only a simple recital of facts, entirely true, as God permitted me to see and take a part in them. I send it forth in great weakness, but trusting in His power to make it effectual to the salvation of souls. If,

when I reach my home in glory, I shall meet one single soul that has been helped there by this little volume, I shall be abundantly compensated for my labor ; and yet I pray, "God grant that it may not be one, but many ;" and to His name shall be all the glory.

Still one more desire there is that rests heavily upon my heart, to which I would give utterance before I close. It is that others may be encouraged by this simple statement of facts to work for the dear Saviour. There is no work that compensates as does this. Other things are unsatisfying ; this, never.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not say that we never grew wearied, nay, at times, almost discouraged ; yet there ever came to us such a sustaining feeling, as the grandeur of the work stood out before us ; such a sense of the smallness of the things of this life, and the

greatness of eternal things ; the honor, to worms of the dust like ourselves, of being permitted to lead souls into Christ's kingdom ; that we were filled with a joy unspeakable. Sometimes we went through very trying scenes, yet never did we for a single instant wish we had not undertaken the work. We only wondered why, when so few women had been called to this glorious privilege, we should have been permitted to belong to that favored few. For myself, I can truly say that I would rather have the most sacred memories of my whole life blotted out than the remembrance of those few months spent in preaching the gospel to my suffering and dying countrymen.

Sometimes, after passing through some peculiarly trying scene, the question would arise for an instant in my heart, "Is this proper work for refined and

delicate women?" I would pause, and there would seem to come a voice almost from heaven, saying, "He that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." How well do I remember one time, when there were many souls who appeared to be just hesitating as to whether they would decide for Christ, and I felt that they needed my presence almost every hour to strengthen their weak resolutions; and yet God laid me for a few days on a bed of sickness. Never did impatient child, longing for its promised pleasure, chafe under its delay as did I at being kept away from my sick patients. I could not trust them with God, but felt that I was necessary to the work, and every hour seemed an age. He taught me patience; yet never did I rise from any sick bed to engage in worldly amusement, with half the joy that I re-

turned to that which would seem to one untaught of the Spirit nothing but a weary round of hospital duties, but which was in reality work like that which the Son of God came down to do, and a privilege beyond all estimation. One lady there was in our number who talked but little, though she felt much. She became exceedingly interested in a very sick man, and labored earnestly for his salvation. After many weeks of patient waiting, she entered my room one day, and throwing her arms around my neck, burst into tears. Quite surprised at seeing her thus lose her self-control, I inquired what was the matter. "Oh, the joy, the joy," she ejaculated, "that God has given to me this day. E——, I doubt not, has at last become a Christian; and he says, through God's blessing, it is owing to my labors. What have I done that I should be thus

blest? Never have I had a joy that equalled this." This was the language of a most lovely and attractive woman, who had had earth's richest blessings laid at her feet.

I know many are timid and fearful; but fear not; God will give you courage and grace, if you will but commence the work. One such I knew, who said, "I can nurse, but I can neither speak nor pray; it is impossible." One day I urged upon her strongly the necessity of addressing the men on the subject of personal religion. "I cannot; do not urge it." I said, "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." Matt. 10 : 36. I pressed the matter strongly. She went back to the hospital that afternoon, and in a day or two came to me saying, "Thank God, you made me promise that day to speak. When I returned to the hospital, God

opened my mouth, and I spoke earnestly. That man is now seeking Christ, and oh, how happy am I ! ”

Many souls since has she helped to Jesus ; and never since has she ceased to thank God for enabling her that afternoon to resolve to take up her cross and follow him.

I speak not now of the future, only of the present compensation the work brings. Undertake it, timid child of God, at once. Go forth in his name, and the power of his might. Fear nothing. He will give you grace. Trust to him, not to yourself, and you will be surprised to see how soon the gifts and graces of the Spirit will fall upon you, and how easy that will become which now looks so difficult ; and you will find a joy in this work which you never have found in any other.

Then think of the reward ! Oh, the

glorious reward of reaching your home, and finding some awaiting to welcome you who might never have been there but for your efforts! Then, when you realize what the joy of life everlasting is, what a crown of rejoicing will this be to you! And oh, the joy unspeakable of hearing him say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me. Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Think you not then you will cast your golden crown in self-abasement low at his feet, and thank him for the privilege of leading sinners home to glory?

O Christian, take this joy which stands waiting for you. Hesitate no longer to take up a work which angels might envy the privilege of doing, and yet which may be yours if you will but accept it. Souls are perishing, men are dying ev-

everywhere. Only look about you ; you will soon find work enough to do. God help you to resolve at once to be a co-worker with Christ. This little volume will not have been written in vain, nor this "Bugle Call" sounded for naught, if it helps one timid soul to commence the work, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12 : 2.

THE SONG OF A TIRED SERVANT.

"One more day's work for Jesus!"

One less of life for me !

But heaven is nearer,

And Christ is dearer,

Than yesterday to me ;

His love and light

Fill all my soul to-night.

“One more day’s work for Jesus !”

How glorious is my King !

’Tis joy, not duty,

To speak his beauty ;

My soul mounts on the wing

At the mere thought

How Christ her life hath bought.

“One more day’s work for Jesus !”

Sweet, sweet the work has been

To tell his story,

To show the glory

Where Christ’s flock enter in ;

How it did shine

In this poor heart of mine !

“One more day’s work for Jesus !”

In hope, in faith, in prayer,

His word I’ve spoken,

His bread I’ve broken

To souls faint with despair ;

And bade them flee

To him who hath saved me.

“One more day’s work for Jesus !”

Yes, and a weary day ;

But heaven shines clearer,

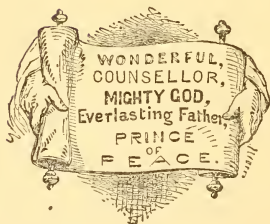
And rest comes nearer

At each step of the way ;

And Christ is all ;

Before his face I fall.

Oh, blessed work for Jesus !
Oh, rest at Jesus' feet !
There toil seems pleasure,
My wants a treasure,
And pain for him looks sweet ;
Lord, if I may,
I'll serve another day.



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